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SENSITIVE
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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND NEA/IPA; NSC FOR SHAPIRO/KUMAR;
TREASURY FOR AHERN
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO USAID FOR ANE/MEA: MCCLOUD/BORODIN
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SUBJECT: PM FAYYAD RESPONDS TO NETANYAHU'S SPEECH

REF: JERUSALEM 1005

11. (SBU) Summary: At a June 17 meeting of donors, Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Salam Fayyad responded to Israeli PM Netanyahu's June 14 speech. He acknowledged the mention of a Palestinian state, but commented that the speech as a whole describes a policy that will not lead to a successful peace process. Fayyad he emphasized the importance of implementation, not just recognition, of previous agreements. End summary.

Fayyad: A "good step," but "Don't park it there too long"

12. (SBU) Fayyad used a June 17 meeting of the donor community to respond to PM Netanyahu's June 14 speech. Fayyad said he understood why some governments characterized Netanyahu's reference to a Palestinian state as a "good step." However, Fayyad said, the international community "can't park it there for too long." He said that the speech encompassed a range of issues which, taken in totality, will not lead to an outcome consistent with international law.

13. (SBU) Fayyad characterized Netanyahu's speech as reverting back to "an earlier Israeli narrative regarding the root causes of this conflict." Netanyahu's words echoed themes heard before the peace process began, before Madrid, and before Oslo. And now, he said, 16 years later, "that narrative has returned." Fayyad noted that there was no mention of ending the occupation or of stopping incursions into Palestinian-controlled areas, but there were references to "Judea and Samaria" and a historical claim to the land. He acknowledged that the Palestinian reaction had been emotional, but he reminded donors that in 2002, then-PM Sharon delivered a speech saying he looked forward to working to achieve the vision of two states, side by side in peace and security. Fayyad called that speech "imperfect" but stronger than Netanyahu's. He asked: "If that earlier formulation didn't work, where will we go from this weak start? If this is the new beginning, you can see why it is viewed with the utmost concern."

Focus on Implementation

14. (SBU) Fayyad said the few vague references in the speech to international agreements addressed recognition, not implementation. He said Netanyahu intentionally did not refer to the Roadmap. For Palestinians, the speech did not seem like a step forward, but rather a recipe for endless discussion and delay.

¶5. (SBU) Fayyad said the speech as a whole made clear that "it will not produce the Palestinian state that Netanyahu - at long last - mentioned." Rather, it seemed that Netanyahu views Palestine "as an entity, a security protectorate of the State of Israel." He noted that Netanyahu continued to defy the international community, particularly regarding settlements. He also noted that Netanyahu called for talks without prior conditions, but his speech was "replete with conditionalities."

¶6. (SBU) Fayyad said that Palestinian anger at the speech was largely a result of its "pedagogical" tone, highlighting Netanyahu's call for Palestinians to come forward and "show courage." He said that, in his view, "the ability to take a strong stance in the face of political pressure is the best measure of honesty, integrity, and conviction." He said Netanyahu should be courageous and follow up on commitments made by the State of Israel, rather than shying away from them and capitulating to political pressure. He encouraged the international community to remain focused on actions and implementation, not just talk.

A Commitment to Negotiations

¶7. (SBU) Fayyad closed by saying he wanted to restate the Palestinian position clearly: "We remain firmly committed to a just and durable peace...willing to negotiate and compromise to establish a viable, sovereign state, with East Jerusalem as its capital." He asked for the international community to take the actions needed with Israel to further

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this vision, including: a freeze on settlements, an end to incursions in Palestinian areas, and implementation of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access. He cautioned that there will be an erosion of Palestinian faith in the process if it slides too far from previous agreements.

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